

**Fact Sheet  
June 2004**

# Former GTE Property Proposed School Site Signal Hill, California 90755



**SEEKING YOUR COMMENTS ON THE PLAN TO MITIGATE PROPOSED SCHOOL SITE**

*DTSC is one of six  
Boards and  
Departments within  
the California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency.  
The Department's  
mission is to restore,  
protect and enhance  
the environment,  
to ensure public health,  
environmental  
quality and  
economic vitality,  
by regulating  
hazardous waste,  
conducting and  
overseeing  
cleanups, and  
developing  
and promoting  
pollution prevention.*

State of California



California  
Environmental  
Protection Agency



*View of proposed school site along Cherry Avenue,  
looking north.*

As you may know from our May 2004 letter and survey, the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) is proposing to build a new school at 1777 and 1778 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street in Signal Hill, California (see map on page 4).

## **THIS FACT SHEET DESCRIBES:**

- What we found
- How it got there
- That it is not a risk to public
- Why and how the LBUSD plans to mitigate the site
- How you can tell us what you think
- Who to contact for more information
- Information on the 30-day Public Comment Period

LBUSD conducted environmental investigations at the site. Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), hydrogen sulfide and arsenic were found at the site. Total petroleum

## **Public Meeting**

DTSC will host an Open House to take your comments, answer your questions, and provide information about the environmental investigation findings and the proposed soil cleanup and methane mitigation.

**June 24, 2004, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM**

Alvarado Elementary School  
Auditorium

1900 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Signal Hill, CA 90755

*Spanish translation will be provided*

## **Public Comment Period**

**June 2, 2004 to July 1, 2004**

The purpose of the public comment period is to give you an opportunity to review and provide your comments on the Draft Removal Action Workplan (RAW) for the former GTE property proposed school site. We invite you to send your comments to:

Mr. Rao Akula  
DTSC Project Manager  
Dept. of Toxic Substance Control  
1011 N. Grandview Avenue  
Glendale, CA 91201  
[Rakula@dtsc.ca.gov](mailto:Rakula@dtsc.ca.gov)



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hydrocarbons (TPH, chemicals in fuels) and low levels of methane were also detected. Based on those results, LBUSD prepared a Draft Removal Action Workplan (RAW) proposing to remove 5,100 tons (approximately 212 trucks) of contaminated soil and install a methane mitigation system at the 1778 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street property under the oversight of our state agency, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). You are invited to review and comment on this draft RAW.

LBUSD is responsible for site selection, purchasing the property, site mitigation and construction. Our agency ensures the mitigation work meets state and federal standards that protect the public's health and the environment.

Under the guidelines of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), DTSC has prepared a draft Notice of Exemption for this project stating that the proposed mitigation will not have a significant negative effect on human health and the environment.

## **WHAT WAS FOUND**

The LBUSD conducted environmental investigations at the two properties (1777 and 1778 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street). Follow-up investigations were conducted at the 1778 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street property. Polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH), hydrogen sulfide and arsenic were detected at elevated human health risk levels for school sites. Total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH, chemicals in fuels) and low levels of methane were also detected.

DTSC determined that no further action is required at the 1777 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street property except for mitigation of lead based paint and asbestos containing building materials.

## **NOT A RISK TO THE PUBLIC**

The contaminated soil is not an immediate risk to the people who work or live near the site because the site is fenced and access to the area is restricted.

## **HOW THE CHEMICALS GOT THERE – WHY MITIGATION IS NEEDED**

Previous property uses that may have contaminated the site include oil and fuel storage in above and below ground storage tanks; automotive repair and maintenance; automobile washing; hazardous waste storage; waste incineration; and rodent poison use. In addition, an old sewer pipeline and an adjacent property that formerly operated as a dry cleaning business may have affected the site.

The chemicals are to be mitigated prior to the school construction process to reduce and/or eliminate any potential long-term health risks to future students and faculty and to avoid further groundwater contamination.

## **MITIGATION OPTIONS**

Any cleanup plan must protect human health and the environment, have a reasonable cost, be feasible and be shared with the community. Protection of human health and the environment is the most important factor. Of the several mitigation options evaluated, the following options were further carefully reviewed:

### **Soil Removal:**

Option 1 - No Action

(we are required by law to include this option as a point of comparison)

Option 2 - Excavation and Offsite Disposal

Option 3 - Selective Excavation and In-Situ Chemical Oxidation

Option 4 - Source Excavation with Biodegradation

### **Methane Mitigation:**

Option 1 - No Action

Option 2 - Passive Ventilation (methane only)

Option 3 - Active Ventilation and Barriers (methane only)

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The best plan that meets these goals is using Excavation and Offsite Disposal (Option 2) to address arsenic, hydrogen sulfide, PAHs, TPHs at the site and Passive Ventilation System (Option 2) is recommended to address the methane in soil. These options were selected because they are protective of human health and the environment, feasible, permanent and have a reasonable cost.

## **HOW LBUSD PLANS TO MITIGATE THE SITE**

Using construction equipment, about 3,400 cubic yards (approximately 212 truckloads) of contaminated soil will be removed and transported to a state approved disposal facility. Then, confirmation samples will be collected to verify that cleanup goals have been met, and clean soil will be brought to fill the dug-up area. The cleanup may last about four weeks to complete (tentatively scheduled to begin in August 2004).

The passive venting system will be installed prior to construction of the school. The system consists of a series of underground pipes that vent gases naturally to the open air. A thick plastic liner will be placed underneath the buildings. Also, barriers and openings will be placed around utility lines to prevent gases from entering the buildings.

## **DEALING WITH SAFETY AND DUST DURING SOIL REMOVAL**

If the plan is approved as written, some noise from the soil removal equipment can be expected. An effort will be made to keep the noise to a minimum. No traffic delays are expected due to the trucks traveling to and from the site. The trucks will exit the site from the East 20<sup>th</sup> Street entrance and travel east, turn north on Cherry Avenue to the 405 freeway and on to the disposal facility.

LBUSD will take the following steps to ensure safety and minimize the impact of dust generated during the soil removal:

- The entire site is secured and fenced
- Wind screens will be attached to the fencing
- All vehicles will maintain slow speeds while on the property
- The work areas will be lightly sprayed or misted with clean water to prevent dust
- Water will be sprayed on soil after it is loaded into the trucks
- The trucks will be secured with covers as they leave the site
- The exterior of the transport trucks will be brushed clean of soil prior to leaving the site
- The air will be monitored at the site to ensure the amount of dust stays at safe levels
- Plastic sheets will be used to cover soil that may have to be left in place prior to offsite transport
- Excavation areas will be covered with plastic sheets in between working hours.

## **YOUR CHANCE TO MAKE COMMENTS**

You have the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Removal Action Workplan. The 30-day public comment period starts on June 2, 2004 and ends on July 1, 2004, during which time you may review and send comments and/or questions on the proposed mitigation options to: Mr. Rao Akula, DTSC Project Manager, 1011 N. Grandview Avenue, Glendale, CA 91201, Phone: (818) 551-2847. Your comments must be postmarked no later than July 1, 2004.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

All comments will be evaluated before we make a final decision. The draft RAW may be modified based on the comments we receive. We will respond in writing to all comments in a formal "Response to Comments" document that will be sent to everyone who submitted a comment and provide an address.

## WHERE TO FIND SITE DOCUMENTS (TECHNICAL REPORTS)

The proposed plan is described in detail in the draft RAW. This document also describes how we looked at the possible health risks. The workplan and the other documents on the investigation are available for your review at the following locations:

### Signal Hill Library

Reference Desk  
1770 E. Hill Street  
Signal Hill, CA 90806  
Phone: (562) 989-7323

### Department of Toxic Substances Control

Regional Records Office  
1011 N. Grandview Avenue  
Glendale, CA 91201  
Contact: Jone Barrio  
Phone: (818) 551-2886  
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

## WHO TO CALL FOR INFORMATION

If you have any questions about the project or mitigation activities, please call the following persons at our agency: Ms. Maya Akula, Public Participation Specialist, at (818) 551-2917; or Mr. Rao Akula, DTSC Project Manager, at (818) 551-2847.

*Si desea información en español, comuníquese con el: Sr. Javier Hinojosa, Jefe de Unidad Escolar del DTSC, al (818) 551-2172.*

For media inquiries, please contact Jeanne Garcia, Public Information Officer at (818) 551-2176. For more information about the DTSC, please visit our web site at [www.dtsc.ca.gov](http://www.dtsc.ca.gov).

## NOTICE TO HEARING IMPAIRED INDIVIDUALS

TDD users can use the California Relay Service at (1-888-877-5378) to reach DTSC Public Participation Specialist, Maya Akula, at (818) 551-2917.

